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TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES OF INTERNET-BASED CLASSROOM LEARNING

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Abstract: Integrating internet in teaching and learning process stated clearly in Indonesia Education Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014 in order to produce qualified and competitive human resource. In relation to this vision, The Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) is one of the most influential institutions because it educates and prepares pre-service teachers. This paper tries to report FKIP teachers' perspectives about how to integrate internet in their teaching and learning process. The respondents consisting of 160 teachers from both Jambi University and IAIN Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin Jambi were involved in the survey. In conducting this survey, a questionnaire distributed to them in order to know the benefits and implementation of integrating internet in their teaching and learning process based on their own perception. The results showed that most of the respondents (70%) claimed that using internet in the classroom was important since it could increase their motivation in learning and it could stimulate their creativities in designing materials and make it easier for them to transfer the materials to the students.

Keywords: perceptions, internet-based learning, and teaching and learning process.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the internet technology has become an important need to master in Indonesia. It almost covers all sectors of life including in teaching and learning activities in formal and informal education. The internet can provide both teachers and students with an ever-growing source of information. Teachers can introduce and use information from the internet for instruction and supplement practically any subject matter (Hargis, 2001, p.1). Furthermore, teachers can not only access the internet for finding resources for their classes but also supply their own materials, knowledge and ideas for other teachers via the internet (Warschauer, Shetzer, & Meloni, 2000 as cited in Shin & Son, 2000). Muehleinsen (1997) recommended ESL/EFL teachers to utilize the internet in their classes for motivating students to use the English language outside the classroom and to make the language a part of their daily lives. Kern and Warschauer (2000) indicate that language learners with access

to the internet can potentially communicate with native speakers of English all over the world. They can communicate either a one-to-one or a many-to-many basis any time they need from school, home or work. Similarly, Daugherty and Funke (1998) described that the internet can provide a wealth of information to students that are not readily available in textbooks or lectures. Students can access information and resources simply by having a computer with an internet connection.

In accordance with the goals of education defined in the Act No.20 of 2003 concerning the national education system; education is a conscious and deliberate effort to create an atmosphere of learning and its process so that learners are actively developing their potential.

Furthermore, in the National Education Strategic Plan 2010-2015, by the year 2025, National Education could produce qualified and competitive human resources. 'Qualified' here means comprehensive, covering spiritual intelligent,

emotional intelligent, socially well informed, and good at kinesthetic areas. While 'competitive' means being capable of competing and excellent in other countries in the world as a global (and winning personality will be devoted to excellence, enthusiastic perseverance, self-contained, never give up, builders and builder network, make friends with the change, innovative and become agents of change, productive, quality conscious, globally oriented, and become lifelong learners). It makes National Education in Indonesia must constantly monitor and adjust all the latest developments both within and out of the country in terms of science and technology for education in our country.

One of the institutions that have major influences on the National Education Visions is the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP). This is because FKIP not only teaches and educates students in general but also prepares prospective pre-service teachers in a number of disciplines. Furthermore, the teacher's perspective in FKIP should be able to support the government's vision and mission. Hence, the government is able to achieve the national education goals through the graduated teachers after they have worked later on.

Therefore, this study aims to see the perspective of teachers at university levels in FKIP towards the ideal use of the Internet in teaching and learning process. In addition, this study also connects it to the vision and mission of the National Education in producing qualified and competitive human resources by the year 2025.

Internet as Teaching and Learning Media

The Internet is world giant library in which there are millions and even billions of information or data such as text, graphics, audio, animation and other digital content. In terms of communication, Internet is an effective and efficient means of exchanging information over long

distances. The benefit in the global access makes internet has its own role, because Internet can facilitate variety resources of learning required by the students.

What is Internet?

Internet or International Networking defined as two or more computers that have connectivity to a computer network covering up to millions of computers globally in the world that are interacting and exchanging information. According to Rusman (2009:5), internet is a vast network of millions of computer reaching millions of people in the entire universe.

Internet is the abbreviation of inter-network. Literally implies a computer network that connects multiple circuits (www.wikipedia.com). Internet network is also defined as computer networks that are capable of linking computers around the world, so that the various types and forms of information can be communicated among the parts of the world in an instant (www.jurnal-kopertis4.org).

The fourth additional to the above definitions of Internet also refer to a collection of computer networks that connect academic sites, government, commercial organizations, and individuals. Internet provides access to telecommunications services of the information resources for millions of users spread across the world. Internet services include direct communication (e-mail, chat), discussions (UseNet news, mills, bulletin board), distributed information resources (World Wide Web, Ghoper), remote login and file traffic (Telnet, FTP), and various other services (www.andhika.com).

In line with the development of the Internet, there are many activities carried out by utilizing it, like e-Commerce, e-Banking, e-Government, e-Learning, etc. One of the activities related to the learning process is the e-Learning. E-Learning is a form of application of information technology in education in the form of a virtual school. E-Learning is an attempt to

make a transformation of teaching and learning in schools in digital form mediated by internet technology.

The definition of Internet also includes software in the form of data sent, stored and accessed at any time. Some computers are interconnected with one another to create a simple sharing function of this can be referred to as a network (networking).

Sharing function is created through a network (networking) not only includes facilities often required, such as printers or modems, as well as those related to data or a particular application program. Internet allows a program to share with anyone, anywhere, and anytime, including the implementation of web-based learning.

The History of Internet

History of the creation of the Internet started from a computer network established by the US Defense Department in the early 1960's, through the project ARPA (Advanced Research Project Agency), called ARPANET, they demonstrated how the hardware or UNIX-based computer software communicate in an infinite distance through telephone lines. ARPANET project designed the form of networks, how much information people can share, and eventually all of the standards they set became the forerunner for the development of protocol bam, now known as TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol). ARPANET was formed exclusively by the four major universities in America, namely: Stanford Research Institute, University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at Los Angeles, and University of Utah, they formed an integrated network in 1969, and in general, ARPANET was introduced in October 1972. In 1981, the number of computers joined the ARPANET network were only 213, then in 1986 increased to 2308 computers, and 1.5 million computers in 1993.

In the early eighties, the entire network covered by the ARPANET project converted to TCP/IP, because the project

itself paused. The pilot project continued and financed by the NSF (National Science Foundation), a science agency such as LIPI in Indonesia. Then it changed the name of the NSF network and ARPANET became NSFNET that its main connection (backbone) has higher speed and connected to computers in the university and research institutes spread across America. Only then, the United States Government gave permission to the commercial in 1990. (www.ilmukomputer.com). Nowadays, Internet used as a new means of communication for researchers to exchange information, a new kind of business for some entrepreneurs and now the internet users have spread around the world.

The Functions of Internet

The development of this technology called the Internet has given such great influence for the public to obtain information needed. The benefits of the Internet caused more by its speed, convenience, cost, and sophistication. If we currently speak the internet, its users are more likely to use the internet for the needs of e-mail and browsing, but the ability and facilities of the internet are more than that. Transfer of knowledge made through the internet would be much more effective and efficient to establish an intellectual generation of the future".

While the basic functions of Internet based on Sidhartha (1996, p.9) in Rusman et al (2011) are as follows:

- 1) Service mail (SMTP: Simple Mail Transfer Protocols), is the service to send and receive messages. Each message sent from one system to another. Behind the scenes, mail service ensures that messages sent and received in full at the correct addresses. If an error occurs, the sender will receive a message indicating that it has not been accepted by the recipient.
- 2) Telnet service (HTTP: Hyper Text Transfer Protocol)—the service provides an opportunity for internet

users to contact a system that is located at a distance.

- 3) FTP Services (File Transfer Protocol) is a service that provides the opportunity for internet users to transfer files from one system to another. This process is referred to as downloading.
- 4) Client / server services, which is a system that is supported by the server program. For examples: Gopher, white pages, Yellow pages, and Iain.

The above statements explain that the Internet has many functions, not just limited to e-mail and browsing, but more than that, the researchers developed a program using the internet for the sake of learning.

Internet Use in Learning

Rapid technological developments have had a role that can be used for various purposes including to education or learning. Internet, as a result of technological developments, certainly have an influence in education. Internet indirectly encourage the education to suit the flow of global information, the Internet can be used directly as a source and medium of learning for learners in developing science. With the web-based learning, it is expected to be a counterweight (balance) of the two.

Keller (1998), an educational technologist in 1960s, criticized the application of conventional learning methods that are less attracted the attention of learners. In his opinion, "the students should be given wider access in determining what they want to learn according to their interests, needs, and abilities". He said also "that the teacher is not the only holder of the authority of knowledge in the classroom". Students can learn to utilize various learning resources. The wealth of information available on the internet has already surpassed the expectations, and even the imagination of the inventor of the system. We can quickly access information resources without limitation. The internet

allows a person in Indonesia to access the library in the United States in the form of the Digital Library. There are many of experiences about the benefit of the internet in research and student final project completion. Exchange of information or asking questions to the experts can also be carried out via the internet. Without internet technology, many of the final thesis or dissertations may require more time to complete (www.jurnal-kopertis4.org).

The academic is one of the most profited by the emergence of the Internet. Various references, journals, and the results of research published over the internet are available in abundant quantities. The students no longer have to be poking around the book in the library as a material to work on college assignments. Simply use the search engine to obtain the necessary materials. In addition to save the energy and costs in the look, the materials can be found on the internet tend to be more up to date.

For teachers, the Internet is useful in developing a profession, because the internet can: (a) improve the knowledge, (b) sharing of resources among their peers, (c) work with teachers in foreign countries, (d) the opportunity to publish information directly, (e) organize regular communication, and (f) participate in the forums locally and internationally. In addition, teachers can also use the Internet as a source of teaching materials to access the lesson plans or syllabus online with the new methodology, access to course material suitable for students, and can convey his ideas.

In the meantime, students can also use the internet to learn by themselves, so it will enhance and broaden their knowledge, learn to interact, and develop their capability in research (www.pendidikan.net).

In www.jurnal-kopertis4.org, it is mentioned that some of the benefits of internet for education in Indonesia, namely: library access, access to the

experts, online lectures, academic information services, provides data search engines, provides discussions, and collaboration facilities.

According to Siahaan (www.depdiknas.go.id/internet/html), there are three forms of learning through the internet system used as the basis for developing a learning system by utilizing the Internet as follows:

Supplement

The first one is to serve as a supplement (additional) when learners have the freedom to choose, whether to use electronic instructional material or not. In this case, there is no obligation or necessity for students to access electronic learning materials. Though it is only optional, students who use it will certainly have additional knowledge or insight. Although electronic instructional material serves as a supplement, the teachers will certainly continue to encourage or inspire or encourage the learners to access e-learning materials provided.

Complement

The second one is to function as a complement (complement) if the electronic learning materials programmed used as the student's complementary material of learning in the classroom. It means that the electronic learning materials programmed will be as a reinforcement (enrichment) to enrich the student's comprehension in taking the conventional learning activities. Electronic learning materials function as the enrichment where students can quickly master or understand the subject material provided by the teacher face-to-face. A group of students is given the opportunity to take advantage of electronic learning materials that are specifically designed for them. The goal is to improve the quality of the students' mastery of learning the material presented in the classroom or additional material assessed by the teacher. Then it regarded as electronic learning materials for remedial if the students who

have difficulty in understanding the subject material presented in the classroom. To this group, the students are given the opportunity to take advantage of electronic learning that was specifically designed for them. The goal is to help learners who get difficulty in understanding the subject material presented in the classroom. The access to electronic learning material is expected to help by facilitating the students in understanding or mastering the subject material presented by the teacher.

Substitution

The internet is commonly used for learning, consultation, discussions, assignments, exercises, and examinations entirely over the Internet. Teachers and students separate each other, but they can communicate any time. It is done in synchronously. This form of learning does not require face-to-face activities for both learning and evaluation for all of the learning process because the teaching and learning process conducted through the internet facilities such as e-mail chat rooms, bulletin boards, and online conferencing.

The above statement explains that the position of internet in learning will depend on the needs of learning itself. There are other benefits of using the internet according to Siahaan (www.depdiknas.go.id/internet/html). Some of the advantages or benefits of learning through the internet are among others; it functions as a tool to achieve effective teaching and learning situations, completes the learning process in order to attract more students, facilitates the completion and the quality of teaching learning materials, and assists participants in understanding the subject matter.

From the above statements, internet can have positive effects on teachers and students. However, the benefits of Internet in learning not only as the learning tool for students, but also useful for teachers to enhance their expertise towards professionalism. According to the results Honey & Henriquez in 1993 in the United

States (in Supriadi, 2005, p.90), about the use of the internet states that:

"... For the education community (teachers, lecturers, researchers, developers), Internet makes them more open-minded, regardless of the isolation, and increase the professionalism and independence."

When viewed from the interaction of teachers and students, Internet also enables the implementation of distance learning, meaning that, all learning is done online and real-time. This kind of learning is familiarly known as the term e-learning. Learning via Internet can increase levels of interaction and learning among the learners with the learning materials, learners with teachers and among fellow students (enhance interactivity). Through online learning, learning climate and feelings of the students considered more conducive and will be able to encourage learners to increase their levels of interaction in learning activities, because they study independently. In the development of e-learning, it is required applications to support the interaction between students and teachers, therefore web-based learning is likely applied as one of these solutions.

The Use of Internet in the Classrooms

ICT-based teaching is one of the highly recommended teaching alternatives either in formal or informal institutions since it has a positive impact on the schools target of improving the pupils' learning. Teachers mostly focus on using ICT to support the subject content than on using ICT to support their pedagogical methods (Lindfors, 2007). Moreover, internet as one part of the ICT itself is quite effective to attract students' in learning. It is proven by the number of schools that use internet as one of the main teaching media besides those are commonly used before like tape recorder, and Over Head Projector (OHP). However, most schools do not really make use of ICT to convey the teaching materials to students through their teachers. The

problems are: (1). Teachers human resource. Based on the survey, only 30% of teachers are able to operate computers and internet. This fact indicates that almost all schools are no ready to implement teaching and learning activities using ICT in general and internet in particular. To cope with this problem, schools should provide training on ICT especially internet in order to enhance teachers' competence of how to operate computer, and internet inside and outside the classroom. (2). The internet connection. Connectivity is also one of the biggest problems faced by schools and universities in Indonesia since the internet connection is very slow. A survey mentioned that this country has the slowest connection in comparison with the country like Thailand and Singapore. The problem is that Indonesia is a country surrounded by islands and mountains, so it is difficult to have strong signal of the internet connectivity. Another problem is that Indonesia has nine internet operators that make the internet signal slower since those operators have to share signals, not like other countries that have only five internet operators. (3). Fund. The last problem previously mentioned can be the most common one in relation to the education problem as a whole. Some schools and private institutions are not equipped with ICT equipment such as LCD and OHP because of the financial condition. This means that there are no teaching and learning activities involving ICT and internet in the classrooms.

There are so many ways in teaching one single subject in a classroom, from what is so called as 'traditional way' to 'the most sophisticated one'. The former refers to the way of teaching a material by using an old method. The 'out of date' method here means that the one which is hardly ever used in giving the material such as; grammar translation method, total physical response and silent way even though those way of teaching mentioned previously are not really 'old' just because they were discovered a long time ago. Whereas the

latter deals with the way of teaching a material by involving the latest technology that is internet. The internet, besides being the source of information both by teachers and students, it also becomes an interesting way of teaching, especially English. The advancement of the internet has created new ways of learning and teaching ESL and EFL. The internet is an ideal medium of teaching since it provides us authentic learning sources without having to go to the English speaking countries like USA, England, and Australia. Crystal (1997) noted that an estimated 85% of electronically stored information in the world is in English, so it is important for English language teachers to look at the social, economic, cultural, and linguistic consequences of the global spread of the English language influenced by the development of the internet. Warschauer (1996) also suggested that teachers should think about the implication of the use of the internet for their classes because the internet has become so widespread in schools with increasing use by both teachers and students. Furthermore, Shetzer and Warschauer (2000) put forward that teachers need to learn how to use internet tools with support and encouragement from their teaching situations. In other words, teachers need to gain knowledge and develop skills to use the internet effectively in order to maximize on line teaching. However, the fact shows that even though the rapid increase of internet availability has generated great interest in internet-based language teaching among English as foreign language (EFL) teachers, little is known at present about EFL teachers' use of internet (Shin & Son, 2007).

METHODS

The study deployed a short survey method in order to find out teachers' current perspectives of using internet in teaching and learning process in the classrooms. We applied convenience random sampling method in this study

since we took whoever came to the campus as our samples as long as they were still teaching this semester. In other words, there were no specific characters in choosing the samples.

This study undertaken to the lecturers of FKIP Jambi University and IAIN Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin and there were 157 teachers there (excluding those who are still taking graduate and post-graduate programs either in Indonesia or abroad). This mini survey carried out in April 2012.

The teachers came from various majors such as; Language and Arts Education Study Program (52 people), Mathematics and Natural Sciences Study Program (68 people), Sport Education Study Program (12 people), and Entrepreneurship Education (25 people). The total number of the teachers in Jambi University was 157 teachers. All the samples were given a questionnaire consisted of 16 questions and they were supposed to give a check () or checks to the options provided in each item of the questionnaire. The questionnaires distributed to them separately at different time, and there was no specified time for them to fill in the questionnaire.

Instrumentation

A set of questionnaire used in this study in order to find out what perceptions they have on using internet in their EFL classrooms. The data collected through distributing questionnaires to the teachers of the university levels of the two state universities in Jambi; Jambi University and IAIN Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin. The validation of the questionnaires carried out by distributing them to some university teachers of the two state universities who were not the samples of the survey. The purpose of the validation was to find out the teachers' understanding towards the provided questions in the questionnaires. After analyzing the teachers' responses on the questions, it shows that all the teachers had the same comprehension towards questions in the questionnaire. It means that the questionnaire could be used as a

survey instrument because it suited the purpose of the study that was to know about the teachers' perspective of using internet in teaching and learning activities.

RESULTS

The following findings are based on the questionnaires distributed to 157 university teachers from Language and Arts Education Study Program (52 people), Mathematics and Natural Sciences Study Program (68 people), Sport Education Study Program (12 people), and Entrepreneurship Education (25 people).

The results of the questionnaire found out that most teachers (70%) agree that using internet was very important in doing classrooms activities and most of them implement internet-based teaching. These respondents were sure that internet can make teaching and learning process easier and of course more interesting. Only the rest of them (30%) thought that internet is not supposed to integrate in the classrooms since they themselves do not have enough knowledge about how to convey teaching materials using internet. The most group who implemented internet in the classrooms were respondents from Mathematics and Natural Science Study Program (25%), Entrepreneurship Education (25%) and teachers from Language and Arts Education Study Program (20%). Respondents who taught in Sports Education Study Program found out to be the least group who did not apply internet in their classrooms since most of the materials conveyed outside the classroom, and the students were supposed to put the materials into practice either individually or in groups.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Some conclusion which can be drawn from this short paper that most teachers had the same point of views about integrating internet in teaching and learning process. In other words, they viewed that it was very important to use internet in teaching and learning process since we are now living in

a technological era. Most respondents also expected that the institution could provide computer and its equipment in every classroom. Internet access really helped both teachers and students in obtaining materials for teaching and studying. We suggested that all teachers, without exceptions, always try to involve internet technology in every teaching and learning process to make the students more familiar in using this technology for general purposes. They can use internet to consult with their teachers, do assignments, and do classroom activities.

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